

# TRANSMISSION

News and features from the Anglican Communion

Winter 2017

## RESCUED FROM DEBT SLAVERY

– Page 10

## MEET OUR NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE

– Page 3

## SUPPORT FOR JAILED BISHOP

– Page 8

<sup>†</sup> UNITED SOCIETY  
PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

USPG<sup>†</sup>

**Cover: Alethi benefited from a livelihoods programme run by the Church of North India (see page 10).**

Credit: Church of North India

USPG is an Anglican mission agency supporting churches around the world in their mission to bring fullness of life to the communities they serve. Theologically, practically and financially, we encourage and enable churches within the Anglican Communion to act as the hands and feet of Christ. Together, we are working to improve health, tackle poverty, put children in school, challenge discrimination, nurture leaders, give a voice to women, and much more. Founded 1701.

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# FAITH IN DEVELOPMENT

It is heartening that the United Nations has acknowledged the critical role that faith-based organisations are carrying out in development and humanitarian relief.

On page 5 we quote UN Development Programme Administrator Helen Clark who acknowledges that faith-based organisations play a vital role in talking to people about what really matters. This is a wonderful endorsement because USPG has been doing just this for decades, even centuries, yet the valuable work we do with our partners has rarely been recognised by the 'big players' in international development.

Hopefully, the tide is turning. We believe it is only when we embrace – rather than deny or ignore – the ingredient of faith that development programmes start to make sense.

The topic of faith and development is so important it will be our central focus during 2018. To this end, we will be looking at the UN's Sustainable Development Goals in our Lent study course and at our annual conference (see page 5). We hope you will be inspired to see how the world church is right at the heart of God's mission to bring fullness of life to all people.

**The Revd Canon Richard Bartlett**  
Director for Mission Engagement

If you'd like to receive *Transmission* on a regular basis, please email [eunicek@uspg.org.uk](mailto:eunicek@uspg.org.uk)

# USPG extends a warm welcome to our new Chief Executive

**The Revd Duncan Dormor, the Dean of Chapel at St John's College, Cambridge University, has been appointed as the new Chief Executive of USPG.**

Ahead of formally taking up the post in January, USPG Communications Manager Mike Brooks interviewed Duncan (pictured) to find out about his background and what draws him to USPG and world mission.

**Mike Brooks: Welcome to USPG! You're joining us from St John's College, part of Cambridge University. How have you found your time there?**

Duncan Dormor: It's been a wonderful experience. While I've worked and taught there for almost 20 years, our community changes every year and the world of higher education is always evolving; so there are constantly fresh challenges.

It has been a real joy to work with young people who are so vibrant, creative and engaged. I'm mindful that we are called to proclaim the gospel afresh in every generation, and I'm interested in how USPG can engage with young people in new ways.

In fact, it's interesting that USPG has a historic commitment to students – I'm thinking about how the UMCA (Universities' Mission to Central Africa, founded 1857) became a part of USPG in the 1960s.

**What have been your main duties at St John's?**

I've had a number of different roles within the college. I started as chaplain, which involved a great deal of pastoral work. In the university my subject is sociology and anthropology of religion, though I've also taught sociology of mission to ordinands. And, of course, as dean



I've had the pleasure of working with one of the best Anglican choirs in the world.

**Music is important to you, then?**

Yes, definitely. Worship and music. One of my proud achievements at St John's was pioneering webcasting services from our chapel, a first for the UK. Now many cathedrals and college chapels do this, and it's giving Anglican evensong a global reach. We have people listening and getting in touch from all over the world – including Mexico and China. A teacher in Scandinavia told us she uses our webcasts to teach her students

Credit: Dumbletons Photography





English because in chapel we have to speak slowly and annunciate so clearly!

In fact, I think music and worship have been overlooked in mission. Music has a healing power and can reach people in ways that words can't. I've often wondered why worship isn't mentioned in the Anglican Communion's Five Marks of Mission.

### **Has the church always been a part of your life?**

Yes, my uncle and grandfather were both parish priests; my father, a lawyer, has just stepped down after a long stint as a churchwarden in Beer, Devon, where I grew up. The other side of my family are farmers.

At university I was influenced by a more evangelical form of Anglicanism, which was very important at that stage, and I guess I would now be described as a liberal or modern catholic. However, I grew up with a practical sort of Christianity and I'm not a fan of labels – the world is much more complex and interesting than labels!

### **How would you describe your theology?**

We are pilgrims together, and in our journey with Christ we need to take the fact that every human being is made in the image of God very seriously indeed – it should prompt us to act in ways that challenge structures of power that promote inequality and injustice. This is what Jesus did again and again. He reached

out to those on the margins.

It can be very easy for the church to turn inwards and become something of a club. By contrast, I think it's only when we reach out into the world, with all its rich complexity, that the church responds to God's call; it is in mission that the church becomes most fully itself.

### **What are your hopes for USPG?**

I am deeply attracted to what lies at the heart of USPG's vision: the transformation of communities by following Christ.

As Christians, we live in a global community and, as such, we all have a great deal to learn from one another's perspectives and cultures. I'm greatly looking forward to listening and learning from our partner churches across the Anglican Communion – this strikes me as a deeply authentic and faithful response to Jesus's call that we love our neighbour. But it is a two-way dialogue and one of my hopes is that, through this ongoing dialogue, USPG can help to bring a greater 'fullness of life' to Anglican congregations in Britain and Ireland.

*Duncan is the author/editor of numerous books. His latest, *Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium and the Renewal of the Church*, is due out soon.* ■

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**Photo: With choristers at St Johns Chapel.**





## USPG Lent course explores global development

**Many of us hope for a better world, but we know that change is not easy. It seems good intentions and willpower alone are not enough. In fact, change is only possible with God because, with God, all things are possible.**

This is the message of our Lent study course for 2018, which has a special focus on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – which replace the former Millennium Development Goals.

Entitled *All Things Are Possible*, the course looks at how Anglican Churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America are playing their part to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and fix climate change. We hope you will be inspired to discover the role that you and your church can play for the future well-being of all people on our planet.

The course was inspired by a growing recognition that faith communities are key players in development. For example, according to UN Development Programme Administrator Helen Clark: 'Faith-based organisations... have an important role to play in reminding us to focus on what really matters to us as human beings in search of well-being.'

It is gratifying to know that faith-based organisations are increasingly being recognised for the important work we are doing alongside our world church partners.

In the UK, Emma Bridger, of USPG, is

helping to lead an initiative that is bringing together faith organisations to discuss how we might encourage the UK government to engage seriously with the SDGs in the UK.

Emma said: 'The SDGs provide an opportunity for us to rethink what we understand by development. For example, how can the UK call itself a "developed" country when many of our so-called advancements can only be sustained through exploitation?'

### HOW TO ORDER

All Things Are Possible is free to order or download at [www.uspg.org.uk/lent](http://www.uspg.org.uk/lent)  
See also advert on page 19. ■

**Photo: How is the UK impacting on global warming? Rugeley Power Station.**

Credit: Wiki Commons

## USPG CONFERENCE 2018: ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

Our conference next year is at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon, from 2 to 4 July. There will be workshops and international speakers looking at how the church is engaging with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Find out how you can get involved! More information in the next *Transmission*.

# USPG reaches out in times of emergency

**Emergency grants from our Rapid Response Fund have been sent to support relief work in Sierra Leone and Bangladesh.**

## SIERRA LEONE

In Sierra Leone, torrential rain and an earthquake in August caused mudslides in the capital Freetown that destroyed homes and claimed over 400 lives.

USPG sent an emergency grant to the Anglican Church to fund food, clothing and medical support.

Jonathan Thomas, of the Diocese of Freetown, told USPG: 'This disaster left over 400 people dead and 600 unaccounted for, with thousands homeless.

'The rains started at about 4am [on 14 August]. It was like the mountain erupted, and mud headed downhill into a densely populated area. Buildings collapsed and were dragged by the mud and water from the hill to flat ground.'

The church provided temporary accommodation in school buildings for those affected and helped with the registration of victims, with an estimated 4,000 people in need of emergency aid.

The Al Jazeera news website reported that Christians and Muslims worked together to help those affected.

## BANGLADESH

Also in August, a USPG grant helped the Church of Bangladesh reach out to communities after monsoon rains caused flooding in Bangladesh and neighbouring countries, with more than 250 lives lost.

The flooding affected 40 million in the region and 8 million in Bangladesh alone. The USPG grant helped to provide food, clothes, medicine and safe drinking water.

Bishop Paul Sarker, Moderator of the



Church of Bangladesh, emailed USPG to say: 'The flood has taken hundreds of lives and washed away many houses, crops and cattle.

'This deluge has created a devastating situation for the people of Bangladesh. As well as claiming lives, more than five million people have lost homes and properties and, of those, only a minimal 30,000 have found a place in a flood shelter. The situation for women and children is particularly harsh.

'The church will focus on the poorest of the poor, primarily women and children, and later we will try to rehabilitate families as much as we can.' ■

**Photo: Transporting goats during flooding in Bangladesh.**

Credit: Balaram Mahalder/Wiki Commons

## PLEASE DONATE

Please donate to USPG's Rapid Response Fund, which provides emergency grants to help churches reach out in times of disaster.

# Online course looks at gender and development

**An online study course looking at gender and global development has been produced by USPG in collaboration with Catherine of Siena College at the University of Roehampton.**

*Promoting Wellbeing and Health* is a six-week course that runs from 5 March to 23 April 2018. It draws upon case studies from around the world to explore how gender, poverty and culture must be a central consideration of any development programme intended to promote health and wellbeing.

USPG Theological Adviser Evie Vernon explained: 'Research has shown that it is essential to integrate gender analysis into development processes. Our hope is that these courses will provide anyone with an interest to explore these issues further.'

The course argues that we need to challenge gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles and that this can best be done in the context of faith.

## FIND OUT MORE

To find out more, email [Susanna.Snyder@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:Susanna.Snyder@roehampton.ac.uk) or visit [www.roehampton.ac.uk/catherine-of-siena/courses](http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/catherine-of-siena/courses) ■



**Photo: Meera Sharma and Kiran Bala, of the women's helpline service in Delhi, India.**

Credit: USPG/Leah Gordon

## RETHINKING MISSION DAY CONFERENCE

### LIVING IN A RELIGIOUSLY DIVERSE WORLD

**Saturday 17 March 2018 at Birmingham Cathedral**

Come and join us for an inspirational day looking at religious identity in a pluralistic age. Speakers include:

- Deaconess Yit Ching Li, from the Diocese of West Malaysia
- The Revd Christine Benoit, from the Diocese of Seychelles
- Richard Reddie, theologian and expert in Islam

### HOW TO BOOK

Booking is open to ordinands, curates in first three years of ministry, LLMs and Readers. Cost £5. For others, booking opens in November. Cost £10. Book and find out more at [rethinkingmissionconference.eventbrite.co.uk](http://rethinkingmissionconference.eventbrite.co.uk)

*Rethinking Mission* is an initiative of USPG that aims to stimulate new thinking about the theology of mission. See [www.rethinkingmission.org](http://www.rethinkingmission.org)



# USPG stands by Filipino bishop jailed on fabricated charges

USPG is standing in solidarity with Bishop Carlo Morales, of the Philippine Independent Church (PIC), who has been imprisoned on the false charge of 'illegal possession of firearms and ammunitions'.



**T**he Rt Revd Carlo Morales, Bishop of Ozamis and a peace advocate, was jailed in May after he refused to leave the side of a human rights activist who had been wrongfully arrested by the police.

Both arrests can be seen as part of a violent campaign by the Philippines' authorities to destabilise the efforts of activists to win better conditions for poor and marginalised communities.

Indeed, in recent years hundreds of protesters have been the victims of so-called 'extrajudicial killings', including lawyers, journalists and members of PIC, which is a keen advocate for human rights.

On 11 May, Bishop Carlo, his wife and a

driver were travelling to Ozamis City when they were flagged down by a man who requested a ride. The man was Rommel Salinas, who, like Bishop Carlo, was a peace activist.

In the Philippines, the police are not supposed to search or arrest peace activists in connection with their peace work. However, on approaching Ozamis City, the bishop's car was stopped at a military checkpoint and, despite his immunity status, Rommel Salinas was arrested.

Bishop Carlo, his wife and driver were told they were free to go, but the bishop chose to stay with the peace campaigner – so the police arrested them all, putting them in handcuffs and telling them they were



accomplices in harbouring a criminal.

Their belongings were searched without any legal witnesses – and the police falsely claimed they had found a bomb in one of their bags. The bishop and his companions were put in a cell and were not allowed to talk in private to their lawyer.

Eventually, the bishop's wife and the driver were released but, four months later (as we go to press on 20 September), Bishop Carlo remains in prison on the false charge of illegal possession of explosives. He is a victim of fabricated charges; his legal counsel continues to work for his release.

### 'FURIOUS AND SADDENED'

The Most Revd Rhee Timbang, Supreme Bishop of PIC, told USPG he was 'furious and deeply saddened' about the arrest of Bishop Carlo.

He said: 'We seek moral support from our partner churches and ecumenical network on this incident which is clearly a case of harassment against church people.'

'We ask the bishops, clergy and faithful of PIC in other parts of the country and abroad to keep praying for Bishop Carlo and company, and to seek ways to help in their immediate release; and most of all to be vigilant against the fascistic efforts of the security forces of this state to silence progressive churches and their leaders.'

USPG Programmes Co-ordinator

Rebecca Boardman said: 'Bishop Carlo is an inspiration to many in the continuing fight for truth, justice and peace amid state repression

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Pray for Bishop Carlo and his family. Pray for his release. Pray for the peace process in the Philippines.
- Share Bishop Carlo's story in your parish newsletter and website and via social media.
- Ask your diocesan bishop to send a message of solidarity to: PIC c/o The Most Revd Rhee Timbang, PO Box 2484, 1000 Manila, Philippines.
- Send a message of support to Bishop Carlo through social media via the Alberto Ramento Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/ifi.rprd](http://www.facebook.com/ifi.rprd)

and persecution. Part of the Philippine Independent Church's prophetic ministry is to support peace. So it is both saddening and alarming to have a bishop illegally arrested, maliciously detained, and accused of fabricated charges. We stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Philippines. They are in our prayers.' ■

**Opposite: The Rt Revd Carlo Morales, Bishop of Ozamis.**

**Below: Demonstrators call for the release of Bishop Morales.**

Credit: PIC



# Church is helping communities escape from debt slavery

The USPG-supported Let My People Go programme was set up by the Church of North India (CNI) to support marginalised Dalit and tribal communities. Report by CNI's Synodical Board of Social Service.



I

ndia's Dalit and tribal peoples – the so-called untouchables – face many hardships due to extreme poverty.

Opportunities for employment and education are scarce and the places they live are prone to frequent floods and drought, which seem to be more frequent.

Little wonder many of these people fall victim to unscrupulous landlords, businessmen and money-lenders. As a result, whole communities have become debt slaves, working in appalling conditions as

farm labourers, domestic helps or brick kiln labourers.

The Church of North India is reaching out to these people through its Let My People Go (LMPG) programme, which is focused on releasing people from the soul-destroying plight of bonded labour.

LMPG offers a range of income generation and training initiatives that are helping people to find a new life free of debt.

## BALJINDER'S STORY

Last year in *Transmission* we reported how

the LMPG programme had helped Baljinder, from Dhanua village in Punjab, to escape debt slavery.

One year on, Baljinder, her husband and three children remain debt-free and have extended their means of income.

Baljinder and her husband were both working for their landlord, as a domestic help and a farm labourer respectively. They were paid very little and had little hope of freedom because they owed their landlord a great deal in rent and loans taken out to buy food.

The last straw came when the landlord suggested taking her eldest son out of school so he could work for him to help repay the family debt. Baljinder was determined her children should have a better future, so she joined the LMPG self-help group in her village, where she learned how to grow and process date palm fruit, which she then sold as a snack.

Having paid off their debt, one year later, Baljinder and her husband have saved up enough money to buy an auto-rickshaw and start a taxi service as a small business.

Happily, thanks to their extra income, all three of their children have been able to remain in school.

## BEEKEEPING

In the village of Chaklabasa, in the northern region of Jharkhand, a LMPG self-help group has a focus on the traditional activity of beekeeping.

Honey is one of a number of non-timber forest products that are a vital source of income for tribal peoples. Traditionally, honey is collected from natural hives in the forest. However, LMPG is teaching the people a more effective and environmentally-friendly approach to harvesting honey.

The traditional method involves burning grass at the entrance to the hives, but this kills the bees and therefore is not a sustainable method. As an alternative, LMPG is showing the people how to maintain constructed bee hive boxes.

Safira Topno, a resident of Chaklabasa, is benefiting from the scheme. LMPG gave her a box and a start-up loan, and she was quickly able to turn a profit.

Furthermore, she has teamed up with other bee keepers in the community. They have rented a space in a warehouse to store their honey and, by working together, they have been able to negotiate better prices for their honey.

Safira said: 'Now I am working hard to motivate my fellow sisters to take up this initiative.' ■

USPG committed £30,000 to the Let My People Go programme in 2017. Your donations to USPG will ensure that our support can continue.

## FACTFILE

- Dalit, meaning 'oppressed', is the self-chosen political name of those considered 'untouchable' within the Hindu caste system.
- Adivasi is a term for the ethnic and tribal groups seen as the aboriginal population of South Asia.
- In India, the Dalits and Adivasis have been socially excluded for centuries, resulting in their exclusion from many basic resources and amenities required for survival.
- Women face even deeper inequalities due to the centuries-old system of patriarchy operating in all the areas of society.

**Opposite: Safira has received training in beekeeping.**

Credit: Church of North India



# 'My ambition is to be a doctor so I can serve poor people'

A USPG-supported skills training programme in India is providing teenage girls with an opportunity to live a fuller life.



**A** skills training programme set up by the Diocese of Nandyal, part of the Church of South India, is giving hope to underprivileged girls. The programme, based in Kurnool, engages the girls in bible studies that have a focus on strong female role models. Alongside this, the girls take classes in English, tailoring, computer skills, the internet, CV preparation and interview techniques.

The aim is to release the girls' potential, to encourage their self-reliance, and to enhance their prospects of employment.

At any one time, 25 girls undergo the training. The following messages of thanks were sent to USPG by three girls who completed the course.



## **SUPRIYA'S STORY**

I come from Atmakur (a rural village). My father died during my childhood. I have a brother. We live

with our mother, who is a teacher and who has taken a lot of trouble to help with our

education. She also brought us up in the spiritual tradition, with Jesus as our Saviour.

I was informed by our priest that there is a skills training programme for rural girls. I am very thankful for it.

Since joining the programme, I have been developing my skills. I have learned much more about the Bible. In tailoring, I have learned cutting and stitching. Through spoken English, I am learning how to speak and write. I have gained computer knowledge also.

I have been developing my skills and I've learned much more about the Bible.

We are taking exams in all of these courses. I praise God for the change it has made in my life. My ambition is to become a doctor so I can serve poor people, the elderly and orphans. I want to serve others, to become a helper to the needy, and to help them develop spiritually.

I am very grateful to our beloved bishop, the Rt Revd Dr Pushpalatlita Thalligaru (who founded the programme) and to USPG. Praise the Lord!



### ARUNAMMA'S STORY

I come from a remote village named Vadala. I am the youngest of three girls. My parents both depend on

agriculture. I passed the intermediate course (at school) but my parents were not in a position to send me for higher studies. I felt very unhappy about my future.

However, after some days, I came to know through an announcement in church that there is a skills training programme for rural girls. I felt happy and joined the programme with the help of our pastor.

Since joining, I have trained in tailoring, computing, spoken English and bible studies. I am developing skills.

My ambition is to become a good teacher. I want to help the needy. If I am able to get a job, I will also look after my parents.



### PULLAMMA'S STORY

*Despite financial hardships, Pullamma was able to obtain a degree. Even so she was unable to find a job. She writes:*

I come from Bhanumukkala. I have two sisters. My parents work in the fields.

I completed my degree but could not go any further because my parents couldn't afford to support me. I felt very sad about this and I asked God to show me the way.

Then, when I went to church, the pastor announced there was a skills training programme and he helped me to attend it.

I am very happy to have joined as I am able to learn a lot from the Bible so I can grow spiritually.

I am also learning computing, tailoring and English language. I hope very soon to be able to find a nice job using these skills and be helpful to my parents. Thank you for giving me this opportunity. ■

**Opposite: Girls gather for a skills training workshop in Kurnool, Diocese of Nandyal.**

Credit: Church of North India

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

This is one of 12 programmes that your church can support through our new Partners in Mission direct-giving scheme, with 100 per cent of all donations going straight to the programme of your choice.

More at [www.uspg.org/pim](http://www.uspg.org/pim)



# Anglicans provide shelter and hope for girl refugees in Athens

A home for unaccompanied female refugees is meeting a vital need, writes the Revd Deacon Chris Saccali, who is the Anglican Church in Greece Refugee Response Facilitator.

**A** girl from Kuwait, not yet a teenager, had become separated from her parents as they travelled through Greece, and she found herself alone in Athens.

Like other unaccompanied child refugees, especially girls, she was at risk of exploitation or human trafficking.

Happily, the girl was found by care workers and given accommodation at a shelter for girls – which is supported by USPG – and she is now receiving psychological care and legal help.

We are very hopeful this girl will soon be safely reunited with her mother and father, who are currently in northern Europe.

Of the 45,000 refugees currently

stranded in Greece (UNHCR), unaccompanied girl refugees number around 150 and are perhaps the most vulnerable, with some of the most complex needs. However, it is more of a challenge for NGOs to support these girls because of the complications involved to ensure sufficient safeguarding and protection. For example, on top of the trauma of fleeing war or persecution in their home countries, many of the girls will have been assaulted or raped on their journey, which means they need specialist care.

Precisely because of these many difficulties and challenges, USPG and the Anglican Chaplaincy in Athens was determined to help.



We have been working with the Greek NGOs MedIn and The Home Project to support a girls' shelter for up to 20 girls, which sits alongside two homes for boys – with more shelters in the pipeline. A number of agencies are helping with funding.

The aim is to give these children an experience of 'home', where they can feel loved. Meanwhile, staff work hard to try and reunite the girls with their families.

The care the girls receive is holistic. They receive counselling and lessons in life skills, with an emphasis on helping the girls learn a sense of self-volition. Among the staff there are interpreters, a cook and a psychologist.

### A SENSE OF NORMALITY

When I went to visit the girls' shelter, I was immediately struck by how the atmosphere was different to the boys' homes I had visited.

For a start, the first thing I heard was the crying of a child. The child wasn't sobbing or in distress, it was just normal crying.

Later, I saw the girls playing games with the child. This was a little toddler who had only arrived the night before. Having a baby there provided a common interest for these girls of different nationalities. Everyone was interacting and playing with the child, both staff and residents. It was moving to witness.

Getting a place at the shelter is largely down to practical considerations; basically, it depends on which girls have the right documents – such as health records that give evidence of inoculations. Most refugees travel with documents, but some lose them en route and it can take a while for them to be replaced. However, in cases where a girl is clearly in urgent need of a safe house, the usual protocol can be speeded up.

These unaccompanied females have been through terrible situations. They want

to be normal girls and young women, living like other girls their age, and the shelter gives them that chance.

### LEGAL SUPPORT

In most cases, the girls are applying for asylum or relocation. This process can take quite a while.

The dedicated legal support we offer is therefore essential. It means the girls are being helped by a familiar person with whom they can build up a sense of trust and relationship, which means they don't have to repeat their stories to a multitude of lawyers.

We are very proud as the Anglican Church to be helping these girls. In fact, from the beginning of this refugee crisis, I think the Anglican Church has been there for those who are overlooked. Our inspiration is Christ, who reached out to outcasts and women. This is gospel work. ■



**Opposite: A child passes the time at Idomeni refugee camp, Greece.**

**Top: Drawing class at The Home Project's shelter for girls, Athens.**

Credit: USPG/Leah Gordon (opposite page); Home Project (top)

Thank you to all who have donated money to enable USPG to support this vital work. Your gifts are making a world of difference.

# 'People are unafraid to say how God is active in their lives'

Evie Russell-Cohen reports on her five-month placement with the Anglican Church in Accra, Ghana, with USPG's *Journey With Us* programme.

**M**y first Sunday was spent at St Joseph's, a massive church with a weekly attendance in the high hundreds. The service lasted a mighty five hours, easily the longest I'd ever been to. I was informed that this was lengthy even by Ghanaian standards.

On this occasion, it was the church's Annual General Meeting, held in the middle of the service. This was funny: as with church AGMs worldwide, a detailed analysis of the past year was not to everyone's taste – and an hour into the meeting the priest had to keep calling out 'Heellooooo! St Joseph's!' to win back the attention of those who had drifted off.

When I phoned home that night, my mum told me that her church, in Ingleton, had held its AGM that Sunday after the service. They'd even sung some of the same hymns. She told me that she too had to fight for the congregation's participation, with many preferring to slip home for Sunday lunch. The unity of the Anglican Communion in action!

Religion is deeply embedded in Ghanaian society. As you wind your way through the crazy maze of Accra's traffic, it's common to see a Methodist church, followed by an Anglican one, next door to a Presbyterian or perhaps a Calvinist church. You're likely to pass shops with names like 'The Lord's my Shepherd Seamstress' or 'Trust God Electronics', and walls are plastered with posters advertising big Easter events.

People are incredibly open about their faith



and unafraid to speak about how God is active in their lives. When asked how they are doing, everyone's answer, without fail, is, 'I'm fine by God's grace.' I was surprised by how hard it is to get used to using this kind of language so freely in my own replies.

## LAST WEEKS IN ACCRA

Reading back over my first reflection (above) is a strange experience. I am now entering the last few weeks of my placement. Time has flown by.

The names of roads and shops are now very familiar. Greeting people with the response 'I'm fine by God's grace' comes easily, in fact I can say it in both Twi and Ga, the two local languages, along with many other phrases.

People who were once strangers are now friends I can joke with and talk to. Any barriers, real or perceived, have worn away.

The diocesan offices had felt like places I couldn't enter unless invited, but now I come and go, fetching and doing jobs for people, without a worry.

I feel comfortable, part of the furniture, and hope the people here see me that way too. ■

## JOURNEY WITH US

To find out more, including details of our next discernment weekend, visit [www.uspg.org.uk/journey](http://www.uspg.org.uk/journey)

# OUT AND ABOUT IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

USPG Volunteering Manager Rebecca Woollgar pays tribute to how churches and supporters are engaging with USPG and the world church.

## OUR 103-YEAR-OLD FUNDRAISER

A big thank you to St Andrew's Church, in Backwell, North Somerset, who raised £315 for USPG with a coffee morning and a collection using the old USPG globe-shaped collection boxes, which many of our readers will remember.

Attending the USPG coffee morning, which is an annual event, was Sydney Cox, now 103, who has been supporting USPG for much of his adult life.

Sydney (pictured, sitting) said: 'I support the work of USPG and pray for all who are suffering from disease and poverty. I pray that God would encourage all who have the means or ability to assist the poor and helpless, especially children.'



## CURRY CELEBRATION

Thank you to Frank Wells and friends at St Peter's Church, Woodhall Spa, who enjoyed a curry lunch to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of India's independence, and raised £400.

## MEET US AT A TOWN NEAR YOU!

We're holding a series of USPG Regional Days around the country.

They're open to anyone interested in the work of USPG, offering a chance to hear inspiring stories about our world church partners and meet others with a passion for global mission.

All days run from noon to 4pm and include a free lunch and refreshments.

If you're interested, please RSVP with any dietary requirements to Rebecca Woollgar by sending an email to [rebeccaw@uspg.org.uk](mailto:rebeccaw@uspg.org.uk) or calling 020 7921 2220.

### Dates for your diary:

- Friday 13 October 2017 – Cardiff Met University, Cyncoed Campus.
- Friday 3 November – Church of the Ascension, Grantham.
- Thursday 9 November – Manchester Cathedral Visitor Centre.
- Saturday 18 November – St Mary's Redcliffe, Bristol.
- Friday 24 November – Church of England Birmingham office.
- Monday 22 January 2018 – USPG office, London.
- Friday 2 February – Windhill Churches Centre, Bishop's Stortford.
- Friday 9 February – Emmanuel Church Bicester.
- Thursday 15 February – St Olave's Hall, York.

If you'd like to volunteer for USPG or book a speaker for your church, call Rebecca Woollgar on 020 7921 2220 or email [rebeccaw@uspg.org.uk](mailto:rebeccaw@uspg.org.uk)



# 'God invites us to grow in depth and this requires creativity'

Article by the Revd Carlton Turner, Team Vicar in the Diocese of Lichfield and Honorary Research Fellow at the Queen's Foundation, Birmingham.

**W**e live in a world where there is advancement in knowledge, in technology, in the means of production – we can grow more with less. But this is not the growth God envisages; it is the growth of a consumer-driven capitalistic world.

Plantation society in the African Caribbean was obsessed with growth, but it was only the growth of capital. It was growth that came at the price of blood. It ignored other knowledges, other cultures, and other languages and cosmologies. Instead of diversity it treasured what was ordered, plentiful, replicable, manageable and quantifiable. It took an unknown world, with unknown peoples, and created order. But order isn't necessarily growth. Rather, listen to the words of wisdom in young Pocahontas who says to Captain John Smith:

*You think the only people who are people,  
Are the people who look and think like you,  
But if you walk the footsteps of a stranger,  
You'll learn things you never knew.*

God invites us to grow not numerically, but to grow in depth – and this requires creativity on our part.

God's work will not be dominated by any one culture or people or educational or socio-economic background.

Yesterday, the church grew by moving from Europe to the rest of the world. Today, in a global village, European Christianity



depends on the growth of the church in other parts of the world flowing back to herself.

Perhaps humility dictates that our ideas of growth be led by the places where growth is a reality – not in terms of numbers, but where we see a depth of conviction for justice, equality and freedom.

It is very often in the places well acquainted with death, despair and marginality that the church finds growth. Somehow, these afflictions help bring about something creative, something new, something life-giving.

## DIVERSITY IS THE KEY

Diversity is key to the growing the church. We see this in the Pentecost experiences in the Acts of the Apostles; the Jewish diaspora heard the news of Jesus's resurrection from people of different languages and cultures.

Further on in Acts, Peter is rebuked for thinking the Spirit should remain solely for the Jews. He learns that Gentiles were not unclean, but were God's people too. The Spirit then falls upon, not only a Gentile, but a Roman centurion and politically superior, Cornelius (Acts 10). And, in the next chapter, the Jerusalem Council is rebuked for its narrow conceptions of God's work. In these passages, we learn that the Spirit remains uncontrolled, working in all people and all situations, and that diversity is central to God's work. ■

# FAITH IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

We believe we can all do something to help combat climate change, whether by making changes in our personal lives or by acting collectively as a church or community.



Our new 32-page advocacy and church resources booklet is packed with ideas and information, including:

- An introductory guide to climate change, including glossary of terms;
- Stories that show the world church grappling with climate change;
- Church resources, including prayers and a bible study;
- Info on how to engage politically by lobbying your MP.

Order by calling 020 7921 2200 or download at [www.uspg.org.uk/climate](http://www.uspg.org.uk/climate)

# ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

## USPG Lent course and resources for 2018

Our new five-week Lent study course explores the church's role in global development.

Taking the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals as our starting point, we are looking at how Anglican Churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America are playing their part to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and fix climate change (see article on page 5). We have also created general and all-age PowerPoint talks.

- Order copies of the course or download all Lent resources at [www.uspg.org.uk/lent](http://www.uspg.org.uk/lent) or by calling 020 7921 2200.





# CELEBRATE ADVENT WITH THE WORLD CHURCH

This Advent, as we consider the plight of the Holy Family, we will be looking at some of the vital maternity care being provided by Anglican healthcare programmes around the world.

We will be presenting uplifting stories from our world church partners and looking at how faith is inspiring practical action that is saving lives.

**DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE ADVENT RESOURCES, INCLUDING:**

- Advent candles prayer card
- Advent meditation film focusing on mothers and babies
- Advent talk and PowerPoint
- Nativity sketch for use in your church

For more information about our Advent resources, visit [www.uspg.org.uk/advent](http://www.uspg.org.uk/advent)

**USPG<sup>+</sup>**